United Nations A/55/344

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 September 2000

Original: English

Fifty-fifth session
Item 37 of the provisional agenda*
Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the special session of the General Assembly in this regard

Twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world"

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

On the recommendation of the World Summit for Social Development, the General Assembly decided in 1995 to convene a special session in the year 2000 to review and appraise the implementation of the outcome of the Summit and to decide on further initiatives for social development. The twenty-fourth special session of the Assembly, entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world", was held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 26 to 30 June 2000.

The General Assembly adopted an outcome document entitled "Further initiatives for social development" which consists of a political declaration reaffirming the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development; a review and assessment of the implementation of the outcome of the Summit; and proposals for further initiatives for social development.

* A/55/150 and Corr.1 and 2.

** Owing to the fact that the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly was held from 26 to 30 June 2000, it was not possible for the present report to be completed by 5 July.

00-62980 (E) 111000

The present report, prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/23, contains three main sections and an annex. Part I provides the background and facts of the special session; part II contains an analysis of the outcome document, focusing on a selection of the most significant new initiatives adopted at the special session; and part III concludes with a discussion of further follow-up action by intergovernmental bodies and the United Nations system. The annex provides an overview of new initiatives.

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I. Introduction

1. On the recommendation of the World Summit for Social Development, the General Assembly decided in 1995 to hold a special session in the year 2000 to review and appraise the implementation of the outcome of the Summit and to decide on further initiatives to strengthen the effectiveness of implementation.

2. The General Assembly in its resolution 53/28 of 19 November 1998 welcomed the offer of the Government of Switzerland to host the special session in Geneva. Thus, the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world" was convened at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 26 to 30 June 2000.

3. Participants at the special session included close to 2,000 members of delegations from 178 countries, 1,200 participants representing 500 non-governmental organizations, 420 members of the media, and staff members of the United Nations and its system of organizations, local staff, local security and volunteers. The special session was also attended by representatives of 56 intergovernmental organizations.

4. The general debate took place during 10 sessions of plenary meetings over five days, reviewing progress in implementing the commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development in 1995. A total of 183 speakers took the floor, including 163 representatives of Governments, 11 observers and 9 representatives of non-governmental organizations. Speakers acknowledged that progress had been largely uneven and that concerted further initiatives were required. The challenges and opportunities of globalization, the debt burden, the need for an enabling economic, political and legal environment for social development, and declining levels of official development assistance (ODA) were recurrent themes in statements made at the plenary. It was also noted that experience over the last five years had shown that sustainable development could not be achieved without integrating economic and social policy.

5. Several initiatives were announced during the general debate. A contribution to the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Trust Fund was to be made by one country, and another stated that it had enacted a law to write off loans to some developing countries and cancel interest due from others. One country announced that it had decided to cancel debt of up to 100 per cent owed by highly indebted poor countries and to contribute 200 million dollars to the HIPC Trust Fund. Two countries announced goals of raising their ODA from 0.9 to 1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), while another also announced a contribution of close to US$ 175 million to developing-country projects in education and combating of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS). Others reaffirmed their commitment to meeting the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) in the short term. A provision of $245 million in assistance over 2000-2001 to help improve institutional and regulatory systems in developing countries was pledged by one Government. Another Government allocated $150 million to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other international organizations for framework programmes aimed at poverty reduction and other Copenhagen objectives. There was also a call for the convening of a large-scale high-level regional conference under United Nations auspices in 2002-2003 to focus on the problems of social development of countries with economies in transition.

6. In tandem with the plenary, there was an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole where statements were made by representatives of agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as 30 non-governmental organizations. In addition, three Chairman's panels were convened, bringing together different social actors. The topics for discussion were: an enabling environment and resources for social development; promotion of full employment; and social integration (basic social services for all).

7. Parallel to the special session, the Government of Switzerland organized the Geneva 2000 Forum: The next step in social development, where different social actors shared experiences, identified examples of good practices, discussed obstacles, and means to overcome them, and new ways to implement the goals of social development. The programme of the Forum included close to 150 round-table discussions, debates, lectures, exhibitions and multimedia presentations. In addition to those attending the special session, over 4,000 persons were accredited to the Forum.

8. The final document, entitled "Further initiatives for social development", was adopted by consensus at

the conclusion of the special session. The text is contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/S-24/8/Rev.1), chap. III, annex.

9. The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 54/23 of 10 November 1999, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-fifth session a report on the special session under the agenda item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the special session of the General Assembly in this regard".

II. Outcome document entitled "Further initiatives for social development"

10. The special session adopted a three-part composite final outcome document negotiated over two substantive sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session in May 1999 and April 2000 and inter-sessional meetings in September 1999 and June 2000 under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Cristian Maquieira of Chile. The final outcome document consists of (a) a short political declaration which marked a reaffirmation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development[1] and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development[2] adopted by the World Summit for Social Development; (b) a review and assessment of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development; and (c) proposals for further actions and initiatives for social development to implement the commitments made at the Summit.

11. The special session marked a renewed and strengthened commitment by the international community to eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment and fostering social integration to achieve stable, safe and just societies for all. With the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the Summit as the basis, the outcome document sets the framework for concerted national and international action to promote just and equitable social development for the foreseeable future and provides a blueprint for action to be taken by Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, as well as broad sections of society, including, in particular, civil society and the private sector.

A. Context

12. The special session took place against the background of a rapid advance in the process of market and technology-driven economic globalization which has opened up unprecedented opportunities as well as posed new challenges to social development. Technological advances, especially in the field of information and communications technologies, have had the effect of connecting all parts of the world and bringing them closer together in time and space, making possible radically new ways of doing business, and profoundly altering social interactions. Domestic deregulation and liberalization of external capital controls have propelled a vast increase worldwide in the volume and speed of capital flows, ranging from foreign direct investment (FDI) to short-term banking flows. Competition has catalysed reorganization of production networks and a wave of mergers and acquisitions leading to a restructuring of corporations on a global scale. These moves reflect a growing international division of labour as the multinational corporations maximize economies of scale, and pursue comparative advantages, global reach and flexibility of operations. The size and power of multinational enterprises have increased. International trade in goods and services relative to national income and consumption has expanded sizeably over the last two decades, including expansion of trade in services such as banking, telecommunications and even education and culture. New mass media, like satellite television, have contributed to globalization through the spread of a culture of consumerism across borders.

13. All these developments have demonstrated the dynamism of the modern market economy. They have also been accompanied, on the one hand, by a weakened capacity of Governments, the international community and local communities to control, or manage global influences and forces for the benefit of all and, on the other, by an asymmetry in the distribution of benefits which has aggravated existing inequalities between and among nations. Policy decisions have played at least as important a role in the spread of globalization in both its positive and negative aspects as market forces and the logic of the new technologies themselves.

14. The Summit viewed globalization as opening new opportunities for sustained economic growth and development of the world economy, particularly in developing countries. It acknowledged, at the same time, that the global transformations of the world economy were profoundly changing the parameters of social development in all countries and were being accompanied by intensified poverty, unemployment and social disintegration and other threats to human well-being such as environmental risks.

15. Part II of the outcome document contains a detailed and sobering assessment of the impact of globalization in many areas even as it recognizes its positive impact in some. It acknowledges that "globalization and interdependence ... have accelerated and often strained the capacity of Governments and the international community to manage them for the benefit of all" and that "current patterns of globalization have contributed to a sense of insecurity as some countries, particularly developing countries, have been marginalized from the global economy". Growing interdependence has, moreover, "caused economic shocks to be transmitted across national borders, as well as increased inequality...".

16. The political declaration notes that "globalization and continuing rapid technological advances offer unprecedented opportunities for social and economic development. At the same time, they continue to present serious challenges, including widespread financial crises, insecurity, poverty, exclusion and inequality within and among societies". It warns that "unless the benefits of social and economic development are extended to all countries, a growing number of people in all countries and even entire regions will remain marginalized from the global economy". It goes on to add that "social development requires not only economic activity, but also reduction in the inequality in the distribution of wealth and more equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth within and among nations ...".

17. Against this background, it is possible to highlight a number of significant conceptual, analytical and programmatic steps that reflect a heightened understanding of the social, economic and political forces accompanying or understood as constituting globalization that have evolved and become more apparent since the Summit, and a willingness to address some of the challenges to social development posed by the increasingly global modern market economy. Accordingly, part III of the document sets out a number of mandates for the United Nations system for follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the special session. Some further initiatives are directed towards specific intergovernmental bodies, particularly the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development, while others recommend action by specific organizations. The majority of new initiatives or commitments to action, however, are of a general nature, of broad relevance to the activities of all entities within the United Nations system engaged in social development. What follows is a selection of significant new initiatives adopted at the special session, which involve follow-up action by the United Nations system. An overview of these initiatives is contained in the annex.

B. Role of Governments

18. Part II of the final outcome document containing the review and assessment of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the Summit acknowledges that Member States have taken a number of actions to enhance their capacities to achieve goals of the World Summit for Social Development. However, it also notes that the years since the Summit have also been marked by growing constraints on the capacity for public action. In some countries, increased constraints, including fiscal and political ones on Governments, have resulted in a reduction of the programmes and activities of the State.

19. At the same time, it recognizes that the State has an important role in the provision of social services but notes that, with the State no longer being the sole provider of social services in several countries but rather the enabler of an overall favourable environment for social development, with increased responsibility for ensuring equitable delivery of and access to quality services, the need for stronger public institutions to provide an effective framework to ensure an equitable provision of basic social services for all, has increased. At the same time, against a background of what is described as a shift in the modalities for financing social protection away from universal, publicly provided coverage to income-based, targeted assistance in several countries, and the replacement of the principle of universal free provision of services such as health care, education and water supply by user fees

and privatization and by more targeted social service provision in some countries, the review also recognizes that an effective and accountable public sector is vital to ensuring provision of social services.

20. In addition, part III of the final outcome document also reaffirms the crucial role of Government in advancing people-centred sustainable development through actions to develop and maintain increased equality and equity, including gender equality; markets that function efficiently within a framework of ethical values; policies to eradicate poverty and enhance productive employment; universal and equal access to basic social services; social protection; and support for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. This is translated into more concrete measures in relation to a number of social objectives by Governments at the national and international levels.

C. Economic and social policy

21. The document advances the current debate on the relationship between social policies and economic development in various complementary ways in the direction of a greater integration of market-oriented economic polices and social development. The political declaration indicates a link between social development and an enabling environment, and notes a growing awareness of the positive impact of effective social policies on economic and social development. Part III contains a number of initiatives in the direction of a closer relationship — if not the integration — of economic and social policy. Some of them seek to ensure that macroeconomic policies reflect and fully integrate, inter alia, employment growth and poverty reduction goals and reassess macroeconomic policies with the aim of achieving greater employment-generation and reduction in the poverty level. There is a call to integrate policies at all levels, including economic and fiscal policies, capacity-building, and the giving of priority to investments in education and health, social protection and basic social services, in order to help people living in poverty.

22. Other paragraphs call for the adoption of the principle of integration of social as well as economic aspects in the design of structural adjustment as well as reform programmes, and an integrated approach to people-centred sustainable development. A number of proposals integrating poverty reduction strategies and social development goals into structural adjustment programmes, designing economic policies for more equitable and enhanced access to income and resources, and protecting core social expenditures from budgetary cuts, have the same effect. There are also references to enhancing positive interaction among environmental, economic and social policies, the coordinated and simultaneous consideration of this objective in the process of policy formulation, and developing broad definitions of productivity and efficiency that factor in the social and economic costs of unemployment and poverty as well as a number of initiatives anticipating and monitoring the social impact of economic policies as preventive strategies.

23. The objective of greater coherence between economic and social policies extends to national and international strategies and programmes to combat poverty at all levels. There are also a number of other initiatives and references aiming at protecting social spending, services and systems during periods of crisis or transition that, too, help mark a social "floor" which should be integrated into economic management. The proposal to exchange and share national experiences and best practices in social development also aims in the same direction. Acknowledging certain limits to the functioning of markets on social development grounds, the document reaffirms a role for Governments in ensuring that markets function efficiently within a framework of ethical values.

24. Against the background of this overarching theme of the outcome document on the need to integrate social objectives into the formulation of macroeconomic policies, the special session agreed on several initiatives under each of the 10 commitments that addressed issues such as poverty eradication, employment, financial crises, greater integration of developing countries, Africa and the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition in the modern global economy, new and additional resources, universal access to basic social services, empowerment of the poor and of women, participation and delivery of social services to those in need, governance and efficiency, gender mainstreaming and equality, health dilemmas facing developing countries in particular, including HIV/AIDS and the commercial aspects of modern medicine, and the role of government in a market-oriented global economy.

D. Financial stability and the international financial architecture

25. With the Asian financial crisis still fresh in the background, the outcome document advocates a number of measures to enhance financial stability and reduce the negative impacts of international financial turbulence on social and economic development. Measures to achieve this goal include improving the transparency of financial flows, developing, strengthening and enforcing regulatory frameworks for monitoring operations, and reducing the volatility of short-term capital flows through improved preventive and early-warning capabilities and consideration of a temporary debt standstill, among other measures. Further measures include enhancing national and international institutional capacities, strengthening regional intergovernmental coordination in economic, financial and social fields, developing domestic capital markets through technical assistance, ensuring that basic social services such as health and education are protected when countries respond to international financial crises and improving national consultations with civil society in economic policy formulation. Governments, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other actors are encouraged to ensure that adjustment programmes put in place to address economic crises do not lead to reduced economic activity or to cuts in social spending. The document also called for continuing work on "a wide range of reforms to create a strengthened and more stable international financial system" to enable it "to deal more effectively and in a timely manner with the new challenges of development".

26. Other paragraphs address more effective involvement of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the international economic decision-making process ensuring transparency and accountability of international financial institutions in according a central position for social development, issues of transparency and accountability by both Governments and international financial institutions for improved efficacy of structural adjustment programmes and fulfilment of social development goals, and improved information-sharing and coordination between the Economic and Social Council and the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions.

E. Poverty eradication

27. The special session notes positive developments in the attention given to poverty eradication in national and international policy agendas, but observes that progress in eradicating poverty has been "mixed" and "uneven". In many countries, poverty has increased and basic social service provision has deteriorated, leaving many without access to basic social services. Lack of resources, inadequate levels of economic development and, in most cases, worsening terms of trade as well as weak infrastructures and inefficient administrative systems undermined measures to eradicate poverty. Other obstacles to poverty eradication included demographic changes, continuing disparities in access to basic social services, lack of access to quality education, uneven access to education for girls and, in particular, the feminization of poverty.

28. Three initiatives contained under commitment 2 of part III of the final document are of particular interest. First, with a view to eradicating poverty, the special session agreed to build consensus with all relevant actors at all levels on policies and strategies to reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by one half by the year 2015. Efforts to achieve this goal involve all parts of the United Nations system and will be one of the principal targets around which the Economic and Social Council is invited to consolidate existing initiatives and actions, including those contained in the outcome document, with a view to launching a global campaign to eradicate poverty. Discussions are under way between the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP and other entities in the United Nations system in this regard. The strengthened mandate and role of the Council in relation to the numerous poverty-related campaigns and programmes are particularly relevant. Second, the document calls for the development and implementation of sustainable pro-poor economic growth strategies that expressly enhance the ability of people living in poverty to improve their lives, including by improving access to productive resources and microfinance, and establishing programmes to raise productivity and improve knowledge, skills and capabilities. Third, it calls for comprehensive national strategies of poverty eradication integrating policies at all levels, including economic and fiscal policies, capacity-building and institution-building, and giving priority to investments in education and health, social protection and basic social services.

29. Contained in the document are elements of a pro-poor growth strategy that combines the dynamic features of the market with the ability of poor people to exploit it through empowering people living in poverty and women, access to productive resources, active employment, including self-employment policies, encouragement of small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperatives, access to microcredit, stimulating agriculture and rural development, ensuring access to basic social services for all, developing pro-poor health systems, and strengthening food security, among other measures. Although emphasis is placed on national efforts and strategies to eradicate poverty, the linkage between national efforts and an enabling international environment is evident in the reference to building consensus with all relevant actors at all levels to achieve the target of reducing the proportion of people living in poverty by one half by 2015, and the need to promote coherence between national and international strategies and programmes to combat poverty at all levels.

F. Employment

30. The need to reconcile market-oriented economic policies that stress flexible labour markets and social development concerns is reflected in the call to reassess, as appropriate, macroeconomic policies with the aims of greater employment-generation and reduction in the poverty level while striving for and maintaining low inflation rates. The outcome document underlines the interrelationship of such policies in an era of globalization by recognizing the need to elaborate a coherent and coordinated international strategy on employment and, in this regard, supports the convening of a world employment forum by ILO in 2001. ILO is also invited to facilitate a coordinated exchange of best practices in the field of employment policies.

31. Another set of initiatives addresses the need to expand opportunities for productive employment, including self-employment, by investing in the development of human resources, entrepreneurship and employability, especially through education, vocational and management training, bearing in mind also the specific employment issues of youth, ageing workers, persons with disabilities, single parents, and the long-term unemployed, with particular regard to women. Areas of special attention from the point of view of training and employment opportunities range from small and medium-scale enterprises, on the one hand, to the acquisition of skills in the new technologies required to meet the demands of a rapidly changing labour market and participate effectively in the knowledge-based economy, on the other. Employers' and workers' organizations, the private sector and civil society are all seen to play a role in training as well as job placement.

32. A number of initiatives relate to the informal sector, including consideration of convening a major event on this topic, to be organized by ILO in the year 2002. ILO is invited to support Governments in extending legal rights, social protection and access to credit to informal sector workers and improving coverage of people engaged in flexible forms of work. The outcome document also calls for improved collection and analysis of basic employment data, including in the informal, agricultural and service sectors, as well as on new forms of employment, and the exploration of mechanisms for measuring unremunerated work.

33. There is an initiative to share best practices on social protection systems, including exploring means of protecting vulnerable, unprotected and uninsured groups, through technical assistance from ILO and other relevant international organizations, and mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of these systems in light of ageing populations and unemployment.

34. A significant set of paragraphs under commitment 3 on employment reaffirm support for existing instruments and programmes on basic workers' rights and quality-of-work issues. These include ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions concerning basic workers' rights, and rights of minors, women, youth, persons with disabilities, migrants and indigenous people, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, the global campaign for the immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labour and ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, and the ILO programme on decent work, and on minimum wages and social protection, as well as health and safety issues relating to employment.

35. The responsibility of the private sector in promoting social development goals is underlined in the notion of "corporate social responsibility" and, under the commitment on employment, in the encouragement to the private sector to respect basic workers' rights. A just and stable legal, economic and social policy framework is seen as being essential to stimulating private sector initiatives in support of the goals of the Summit.

G. Social integration

36. Regarding social integration, the focus is on the need to meet the challenge of exclusion through the empowerment and greater participation in decision-making and delivery of services of the poor, women, workers and disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and targeting social services to groups with special needs, notably the ageing, indigenous people, the disabled and migrants. Civil society, the media, the family and voluntarism also have a role in eliminating racial discrimination and other forms of intolerance.

37. In the context of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Spain in 2002, there is a decision to exchange views and information on national experience and best practices in designing and implementing policies and programmes on ageing, and to support research on the actual and projected situation of older persons, particularly in developing countries.

38. In the area of conflict prevention, resolution and management, there is a call to strengthen organizations and mechanisms working for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts, inter alia, through addressing the social roots and consequences of conflicts, as well as for strengthening the capability of relevant United Nations bodies to promote social integration in post-conflict management strategies and activities, including addressing recovery from traumatic stress. Another decision calls for the consideration of measures to minimize the social and humanitarian impact of sanctions. Finally, issues of corruption, transnational organized crime and drugs and substance abuse are also addressed.

H. Gender

39. The outcome document calls upon the international community to take fully into account and implement the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century". It also calls for gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the further initiatives related to each of the commitments made at the Summit, including through the use by Governments and international organizations of positive or affirmative action and empowerment programmes.

40. The theme of empowerment of women has been addressed in some detail, with specific targets to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005, ensure free compulsory and universal primary education for both girls and boys by 2015, and achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women. There is also a call to strengthen efforts to increase women's participation in the labour market on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, reduce maternal morbidity and mortality as a health priority, eliminate violence against women and increase access of women and girls to all levels and forms of education, among other measures. The need for gender-related analysis, data disaggregated by sex, and gender impact assessments is also underscored.

I. Health and education for all

41. The outcome document recognizes Governments' primary responsibility for providing or ensuring access to basic social services for all, and developing sustainable, pro-poor health and education systems. In the sphere of education, the outcome document provides a strong reaffirmation of the Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments[3] adopted at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000, and a commitment to promote its goals. It also recognizes that the achievement of education for all goals requires additional financial support, increased ODA and debt relief in the order of $8 billion a year to developing countries and that new financial commitments by Governments as well as by bilateral and multilateral donors and the World Bank and regional development banks need to be made. It also encourages new actions at the international level,

including proclaiming a United Nations literacy decade to support national efforts to achieve universal access to basic education and primary health services for all by 2015.

42. Another significant initiative is to encourage and assist developing countries and others in need in building capacities for secondary and tertiary education and in skills and technologies necessary for effective participation in the modern knowledge-based global economy.

43. Recognizing, in the area of health, that exclusively market-driven health services run the risk of excluding the poor and the marginalized from quality health services, the document proposes that, where appropriate, the possibility of promoting non-profit community-based health insurance programmes be explored among possible methods to support Governments in promoting accessible primary health care to all.

44. Several new initiatives focus on the need to provide essential medicines at affordable prices for developing countries. One such proposal encourages all actors to provide incentives for commercial enterprises, particularly in pharmaceuticals, to invest in research aimed at providing affordable remedies for diseases that particularly afflict people in developing countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) is invited to strengthen public-private partnerships in the area of health research. While the importance of protecting intellectual property rights to promote research, development and distribution of drugs is acknowledged, the document also notes that these rights should contribute to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge and in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare. It agrees that Member States may freely exercise, consistent with national laws and international agreements acceded to, in an unrestricted manner, the options available to them under international agreements to protect and advance access to life-saving, essential medicines.

45. The document calls on WHO, in collaboration with Governments and relevant international organizations, to monitor and analyse the pharmaceutical and public-health implications of international trade agreements. WHO is further called upon, with assistance from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Trade Organization and other organizations, to assist Governments in improving capacities to analyse the consequences of agreements on trade in health services for health equity and other social objectives.

46. In recognition of the close interdependence between health and fields such as employment, education and macroeconomic policy, among others, the organizations of the United Nations system are invited to cooperate with WHO in integrating health aspects into their policies and programmes.

47. A considerable number of initiatives address HIV/AIDS. The document calls for multisectoral measures at the national level to prevent and protect against the HIV/AIDS infection and address the consequences of HIV/AIDS transmission. Suggested measures include strengthening health-care services, improving information and education, training health-care providers, addressing mother-to-child transmission, analysing the political, social and economic aspects of HIV/AIDS, and providing social and educational support to affected groups. The 25 African countries most affected by HIV/AIDS are encouraged to adopt time-bound targets to reduce infection levels, such as a 25 per cent reduction among young people by the year 2005. The Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (UNAIDS) and its co-sponsoring agencies are invited to present a strategy for achieving this target.

J. Greater integration of developing countries, Africa and the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition in an increasingly globalized economy

48. The political declaration identified insecurity, financial crises, poverty, inequality, exclusion and marginalization of a growing number of people in all countries and even entire regions as some of the serious challenges presented by globalization and recognized that there remained considerable obstacles to further integration and full participation in the global economy for many developing countries, in particular least developed countries, as well as for some economies in transition. In line with that assessment, part III of the document contains a number of proposed

actions and initiatives that acknowledge the need to strengthen the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to address the obstacles that hinder their participation in an increasingly globalized economy.

49. This increased participation is primarily through capacity-building in spheres of industry, technology, trade and human resource development and improved access to international markets and the multilateral trading system. Measures include stimulating and strengthening the industrialization process and productive capacities in developing countries; facilitating the transfer of appropriate technology, know-how, knowledge and information to developing countries and economies in transition to complement national efforts in these areas through international cooperation; increasing and improving access of products and services of developing countries and of countries with economies in transition to international markets through, inter alia, the negotiated reduction of tariff barriers and the elimination of non-tariff barriers; accelerating the process leading to the further accession of countries to the World Trade Organization; and providing technical assistance for building the trading capacity of countries as well as their ability to participate more effectively in international trade negotiations, including the World Trade Organization dispute settlement mechanism.

50. Several suggested actions specifically relate to enhancing the participation of Africa and the least developed countries in the multilateral trading system and the global economy. These include implementing multilateral debt-relief initiatives that can lead to a sustainable solution to these countries' debt burden and encouraging bilateral initiatives that could contribute to national development objectives, improving market access, including tariff- and quota-free treatment for all products originating in least developed countries, pursuing growth-enhancing poverty-reducing economic reforms and assisting Governments in enhancing their productive capacity and competitiveness through a range of policies, programmes and measures. These measures include agricultural and industrial diversification, encouraging domestic and foreign investment notably in the sphere of technology development and critical infrastructure services, developing venture capital funds for investment in fields conducive to sustainable development and supporting efforts at human resource development ranging from achieving quality basic education for all to investment in secondary and tertiary education, improving management and enrolment ratios, allocating of additional resources for education, and taking steps to encourage skilled Africans to remain in the region and contribute to the development of Africa.

51. Another set of initiatives address the need of additional and concessional resources for Africa and least developed countries. They include allocation of resources by the international community including by United Nations funds and programmes on concessional terms for economic and social development and urging developed countries to strive to fulfil the agreed target of earmarking from 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of GNP as ODA for the least developed countries. Another initiative is for Governments to consider the establishment of world solidarity fund for poverty eradication and social development in the poorest regions of the world.

52. A further set of measures address the crisis caused by HIV/AIDS and other communicable and infectious diseases in Africa, stressing a multisectoral response, wider access to quality medication by ensuring the provision, affordability and distribution and delivery of drugs, putting in place a strong generic drug policy, and allocation of additional resources, and support for research, development and training in Africa and the least developed countries in the field of vaccines, medicine and public health.

K. Debt

53. In the area of debt relief, creditor and debtor countries as well as the international financial institutions are called upon to identify and implement durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries. The document encourages creditor countries and institutions to achieve rapid progress towards faster, broader and deeper debt relief as provided for under the enhanced HIPC initiative and supports the principle that funds saved should be allocated to poverty eradication and social development. At the bilateral level, creditor countries are encouraged to implement debt-relief arrangements for the African and the least developed countries and to ensure that this relief contributes to national development objectives. Furthermore, concerted national and international

action is called for to address the debt problems of both low- and middle-income developing countries.

54. With respect to official and concessional financing, the document urges international action in providing concessional financing for social development programmes and projects, and calls for continued international cooperation including a reaffirmation to strive to fulfil the yet-to-be-attained internationally agreed target or 0.7 per cent of GNP of developed countries for overall ODA as soon as possible.

L. Resources for social development

55. Against the background of a reduced capacity on the part of many Governments, especially those of developing countries, to raise resources for social development through taxation in the context of the mobility of capital, a number of initiatives to mobilize resources for social development at both the national and the international level were agreed upon, including supporting Governments in establishing guidelines for generating domestic revenue for social services, social protection and social programmes.

56. Considerable emphasis is placed in the document on efficiency, management and governance issues in relation to effective use of resources that can be raised within existing patterns of financing. Thus the document calls for restructuring public expenditure policies to make them more efficient, transparent and accountable, reallocating public resources away from excessive military expenditures to social development, enhancing the cost-effectiveness of social spending, improving the efficiency of tax administration and reducing tax evasion, combating corruption, bribery, money laundering, illegal transfer of funds, tax shelters and tax havens, and tax avoidance and promoting greater efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources for social development. Similar concerns are also reflected in relation to the provision of social services and utilization of foreign aid. A number of proposals on the development of statistics and indicators relating to poverty, employment, women, health and social development are intended to help monitor both performance and efficient utilization of resources at the national level.

57. A second set of proposals envisages broadening sources of revenue by attracting private investment and new forms of public borrowing, and involving civil society as a partner in the provision of social services. A third set attempts to reform taxation systems to make them more equitable, broad-based and progressive. A last set addresses issues of debt relief and ODA.

58. Suggested national initiatives to mobilize new and additional resources include extending access to microcredit, supporting community participation in local infrastructure planning and maintenance, including mechanisms for community contracting of labour-based works, improving national tax administration systems to enable more efficient financing of social development, reducing tax evasion and preventing corruption, bribery, money laundering and illegal transfer of funds.

59. At the international level, the document sets out initiatives on promoting international cooperation in tax matters, exploring methods for taxation of multinational corporations, combating the use of tax shelters and tax havens, improving mechanisms for stabilizing commodity price earnings, preventing tax avoidance, and increasing public and private resource flows for social development in developing countries. These matters will be referred to the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters.

60. The document also calls for a rigorous analysis of new and innovative sources of public and private funding for social development and poverty eradication programmes. A member of delegations stated at the closing of the special session that this analysis was to include the currency transaction tax. To implement this recommendation, a group of independent experts will be appointed to make an authoritative and rigorous study.

III. Conclusion: further follow-up action

61. The outcome of the special session was the culmination of a comprehensive effort involving a wide range of actors to follow up and implement the consensus reached at Copenhagen in 1995. The review and appraisal showed that Member States had taken tangible steps towards incorporating the social development objectives contained in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action into their national policies. Civil society, the private sector and other actors have played an important role in the

implementation of these goals as well as in the preparatory process for the special session held at Geneva. Organizations of the United Nations system have likewise both embraced the commitments made at the World Summit for Social Development in their programmatic and operational activities and provided critical input to the Geneva outcome.

62. Elaborating and bringing up to date the Copenhagen consensus, the Geneva outcome document, entitled "Further initiatives on social development", constitutes an important proclamation by Member States on how to promote social development in the context of globalization, thereby establishing a broad framework for follow-up action by Governments, civil society and the international community.

63. The outcome document establishes a number of specific mandates for further action by the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system, particularly the Economic and Social Council, including:

- Inviting the Economic and Social Council to consolidate the ongoing initiatives and actions established in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), and the recommendations contained in the outcome document of the twenty-fourth special session with a view to launching a global campaign to eradicate poverty;
- Requesting the Economic and Social Council to consider, through the Commission for Social Development, ways of sharing experiences and practices in social development, so as to assist Member States in the development of policies to promote the goals of the Summit;
- Inviting the Commission for Social Development to consider the issue of voluntarism in 2001, the International Year of Volunteers;
- Strengthening the Economic and Social Council in its coordination of international action in follow-up to the United Nations conferences and summits by fostering a closer working relationship with the funds and programmes and specialized agencies and by cooperating with the Bretton Woods institutions to ensure that the objectives and policy approaches of these conferences and summits are given due consideration;
- Requesting the Economic and Social Council, through the Commission for Social Development, to regularly assess the further implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session.

64. The outcome document covers a broad range of critical issues relating to global social development that merit further in-depth consideration by appropriate entities within the United Nations system. In this regard, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs has written to heads of agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system on how specific initiatives could best be incorporated in the activities carried out within their regular programmes of work, and to develop modalities for implementation and cooperation.

65. It should be recalled that the Commission for Social Development, at its thirty-ninth session to be held in February 2001, is to decide on its programme of work for the five-year period 2002-2006. Accordingly, the Commission may wish to consider some of the issues highlighted in this report as possible themes for its future work. For its thirty-ninth session, the Commission will have as its priority theme "Enhancing social protection and reducing vulnerability in a globalizing world"; and as its sub-theme "The role of volunteerism in the promotion of social development".

66. Many of the issues addressed at the special session will also be subject to further deliberation at upcoming major intergovernmental conferences within the United Nations system, including at the Millennium Summit (6-8 September 2000) and the Millennium Assembly (fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly). On the recommendation of the special session, the high-level international intergovernmental event on financing for development (2001) will consider the mobilization of national and international resources for social development for the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. Similarly, the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (14-20 May 2001) will take up many of the further initiatives pertaining to Africa and the least developed countries. The World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (31 August-7

September 2001) and the Second World Assembly on Ageing (2002) will follow up on further initiatives contained in the commitment on social integration. As referred to in commitment 3, the special session supports ILO's convening of a world employment forum in 2001. Finally, the outcome document is expected to contribute to the preparatory processes of the upcoming special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (June 2001) and the special session of the General Assembly in 2001 for follow-up to the World Summit for Children (September 2001), as well as the 10-year review of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (2002).

Notes

[1] Report of the *World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] Ibid., annex II.

[3] Text currently accessible at: http://www2.unesco.org/wef/en-conf/dakframeng.shtm#top.

Annex

Overview of new initiatives

The new initiatives highlighted below are presented in the order they appear in the outcome document of the special session. Several of the initiatives relate to more than one commitment.

An enabling environment

- Institute systems for assessing and monitoring the social impact of macroeconomic policies, particularly in response to financial crises and in the design of reform programmes.
- Develop national and regional guidelines for assessing the social and economic cost of unemployment and poverty, based on broad definitions of efficiency and productivity.
- Request the Economic and Social Council/Commission for Social Development to consider ways of sharing experiences and best practices in social development to promote the goals of the Summit.
- Improve access to the global trading system for developing countries and countries with economies in transition through, inter alia, furthering the process of accession to the World Trade Organization and providing technical assistance (bilaterally and as well as through the World Trade Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Trade Centre) in participating in international trade negotiations.
- Reduce the negative social and economic impacts of international financial turbulence through, inter alia, consideration of a temporary debt standstill to reduce volatility of short-term capital flows, provision of technical assistance to strengthen domestic capital markets, protection of basic social services such as health and education, and strengthening of national consultations with civil society in economic policy formulation.
- Enhance participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in international economic decision-making processes, including ensuring transparency and accountability of the international financial institutions to promote social development goals in their policies and programmes.
- Endorse the speedy implementation of the Cologne debt-relief initiative and the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative and the principle that funds saved should be allocated to social development.
- Encourage corporate social responsibility by promoting corporate awareness, providing an enabling and stimulating environment and enhancing national partnerships.
- Consider measures to minimize the social and humanitarian impact of sanctions.

Poverty eradication

- Reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by one half by the year 2015.
- Develop and implement pro-poor growth strategies.

Full employment

- Share best practices on social protection systems, including exploring means of protecting vulnerable, unprotected and uninsured groups (through technical assistance from the International Labour Organization (ILO)) and mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of these systems in light of ageing populations and unemployment.
- Reassess macroeconomic policies to balance goals of employment-generation and poverty reduction with low inflation rates.
- Ensure social dialogue through effective representation of workers' and employers' organizations in the development of social policies.
- Elaborate a coherent and coordinated international strategy on employment.

- Exchange best practices in the field of employment policies.
- Ratify and fully implement ILO Conventions on basic workers' rights.
- Improve collection and analysis of basic employment data, including the informal, agricultural and service sectors, and explore means of measuring unremunerated work.

Social integration

- Exchange national experience and best practice in policies and programmes on ageing.
- Support research on the actual and projected situation of older persons to contribute to the Second World Assembly on Ageing.
- Strengthen organizations and mechanisms working for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts.
- Strengthen the capability of relevant United Nations bodies to promote social integration in post-conflict management strategies and activities, including addressing recovery from traumatic stress.

Gender equality

- Ensure gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the outcome of the Summit and the further initiatives adopted at the special session, inter alia, through the use of positive or affirmative action.

Education and health

- Reaffirm the Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments, adopted at the World Education Forum in Dakar, and recognize that the achievement of this goal requires additional financial support, official development assistance (ODA) and debt relief in the order of $8 billion a year.
- Enhance national measures to prevent and protect against human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) infection and address the consequences of HIV/AIDS transmission, including: strengthening of health-care services, improving information and education, training health-care providers, addressing mother-to-child transmission, analysing the political, social and economic aspects of HIV/AIDS, and providing social and educational support to affected groups.
- Mobilize commercial enterprises to invest in research aimed at providing affordable remedies for diseases that particularly afflict people in developing countries.
- Recognize the critical importance of access to essential medicines at affordable prices, and acknowledge the contribution of intellectual property rights to promoting research, development and distribution of drugs.
- Analyse the consequences of agreements on trade in health services.
- Monitor and analyse the pharmaceutical and health implications of relevant international agreements, including trade agreements.
- Invite organizations of the United Nations system to integrate the health dimension into their policies and programmes.

Africa and the least developed countries

- Consider the establishment of a world solidarity fund.
- Encourage the 25 African countries most affected by HIV/AIDS to adopt time-bound targets for reducing infection levels, such as a 25 per cent reduction among young people by the year 2005.

Structural adjustment programmes

- Ensure that adjustment programmes to address economic crises do not lead to decreasing economic activity or sharp cuts in social spending.

Resources

- Establish guidelines for policies aimed at generating domestic revenue for social policies and programmes, including in areas such as the broadening of the tax base, the efficiency of tax administration, new sources of revenue, and public borrowing.

- Mobilize new and additional resources for social development at the national level by extending access to microcredit, supporting mechanisms for community contracting of labour-based works, improving national tax regimes and reducing tax evasion, and preventing corruption, bribery, money laundering and illegal transfer of funds.

- Mobilize new and additional resources for social development at the international level through international cooperation in tax matters, exploration of methods for taxation of multinational corporations, combating the use of tax shelters and tax havens, mechanisms for stabilizing commodity price earnings, prevention of tax avoidance, increase in public and private flows to developing countries, rigorous analysis of new and innovative sources of funding for social development and promotion of micro- and small enterprise sectors.

International cooperation

- Strengthen the Economic and Social Council in its coordination of follow-up to the United Nations conferences and summits by fostering a closer working relationship with the funds and programmes and specialized agencies and cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions.

- Adopt legislative measures and expand awareness by parliamentarians to implement the outcome of the Summit and the further initiatives adopted at the special session.

- Invite the Economic and Social Council to launch a global campaign to eradicate poverty.

- Request the Economic and Social Council/Commission for Social Development to regularly assess the implementation of the outcome of the Summit and the special session.